

# Accessibility for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities

(outside Web Content Accessibility Guidelines)

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## What is a developmental disability?

Developmental disabilities are a group of conditions due to an impairment in physical, learning, language, or behavior areas.

- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Cerebral Palsy
- Intellectual Disability
- Learning Disorders

7.39 million people  
have a developmental  
disability in the United  
States

National Health Interview Survey Disability  
Supplement, 2019



## My Experience



Dishes in the sink; Abstract communication instead of literal meaning



Sirens; Sensory considerations



Fire alarms; Giving notice



Call center; Knowing the person's skill set

## My Recommendations

### For Employers

- Be willing to accommodate, even if you don't understand
- Be open minded, willing to learn, and sensitive

RECOMMENDED



### For Employees

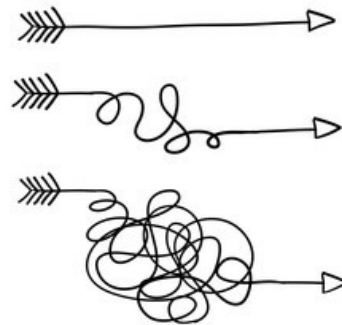
- Don't be afraid to ask for an accommodation
- Know your rights
- Know your limitations and triggers

# Three Key Principles



## 1. Simple and Clear Language

- Use simple language
- Define the hard words
- Avoid acronyms
- Structure with headings
- Bulleted lists
- Avoid jargon, metaphors, and figures of speech



## 2. Multi-modal

- Have both auditory and visual options with the ability to remove one or the other
  - Note: More than one may be distracting to some people
- Visual options like captions
  - Individuals may process or produce language at a different rate; reading the words as well as hearing them may help understanding
  - Background noise may pose barriers, captions may allow for people to turn off the volume or wear noise canceling headphones and still attend
  - Individuals with Down Syndrome tend to have poor auditory short term memory (may not remember what they just heard), using captions may help



## 2. Multi-modal continued

- Visual
  - Video to explain information
- Auditory
  - Read aloud features
- Use images to enhance content
  - Diagrams
  - Avoid decorative or non-relevant information and distractions



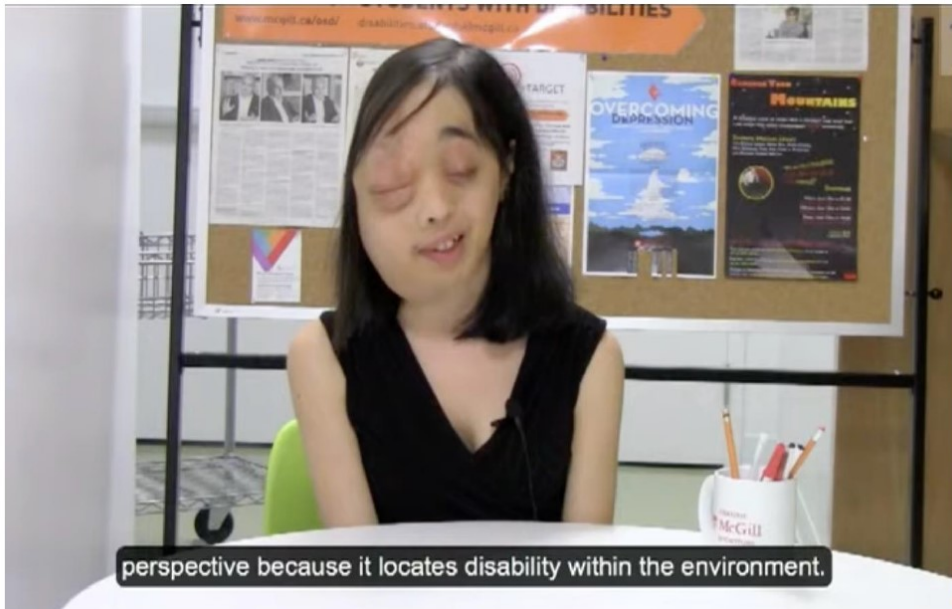


### 3. Compatible with Assistive Technology

- People with developmental disabilities often use screen readers, text-to-speech systems, or other assistive technologies
- Ensure accessible with:
  - Alternative (alt) text on images, charts, etc.
  - Keyboard navigation



# The Social Model of Disability



[Social Model of Disability Video Link](#)



Thank you

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